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ABSTRACT

The influence of citizens on educational collective bargaining was examined in this study of eight school districts in California and Illinois. Data were collected through interviews with persons active in collective bargaining and observation of bargaining sessions and other meetings. The study revealed that citizens rarely participate directly in collective bargaining but may have strong influence over it through school board recall votes or elections. The authors differentiate between client participation (in which parents act as representatives of their children's rights) and citizen participation (in which parents attempt to alter organizational policy and practice) and discuss causes for movement from the former to the latter. The authors identify three decision-making arenas: legal/political, professional/bureaucratic, and labor relations. They suggest that the criteria that citizens use in deciding whether to participate in a particular arena are permeability of the arena, efficacy of entering that arena, and efficiency of influencing decisions in that arena. The report concludes that since the criteria used by citizens in deciding how and when to participate leads them away from direct participation in collective bargaining, public policy attention ought to be focused on encouraging citizen influence rather than on furthering direct participation. (Author/JM)

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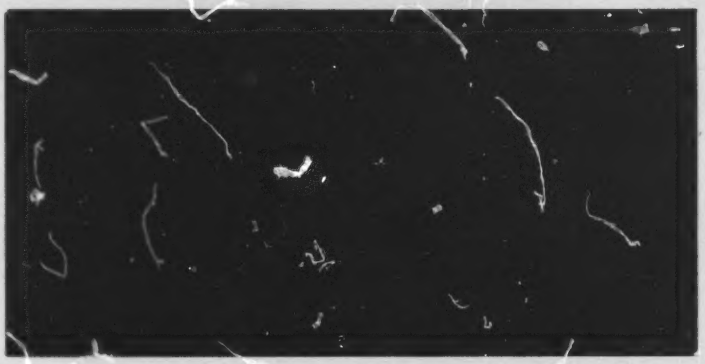

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THE LOGIC OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC SCHOOL LABOR RELATIONS

by

Charles Kerchner, Douglas Mitchell,
Gabrielle Pryor and Wayne Erck

IRE Report No. 4

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PREFACE

The Institute for Responsive Education's Reports are an outgrowth of IRE's continuing interest in citizen participation in educational decision-making. The study on which this Report is based was made possible, in part, by the National Institute of Education grant no. 6-79-0056. Earlier versions of this Report by Charles T. Kerchner, Douglas E. Mitchell, Gabrielle Pryor and Wayne Erck were presented before meetings of the Informational Project for Education-Network and the Amercian Educational Research Association in the spring of 1981.

The contents of this Report and the opinions expressed are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy of NIE or IRE.

Editing and production work at IRE was the responsibility of Gian S. Lombardo, aided by Owen Heleen. W. Dana Rudolph, Janet R. Holtz, Karen Garafola and Monica Bignelli also assisted in the production of this Report.

ABSTRACT

This Report examines the various means by which citizens choose to influence school policies within the context of educational collective bargaining. It is the result of a study of four school districts in California and four school districts in Illinois through an entire bargaining cycle--from issue information to settlement. Contained in this Report are:

- The finding that although citizens rarely participate directly in collective bargaining (owing to the closed nature of such negotiations), their influence may nevertheless be quite strong e.g. through school board recall votes or elections.
- A description of the movement from client participation to citizen participation, in which parents who see themselves as protecting the rights of their children become converted into citizens intent on altering organizational policy and practice.
- The criteria for citizen participation, which include three different arenas for decisionmaking: the legal/political arena, the professional/bureaucratic arena, and the arena of labor relations.
- Three models of school democracy and equality of influence: informed competition, in which equity centers on a perception of legitimacy in how decisions are made; issue responsiveness in which equity centers on a finding of legitimacy in what is decided; and dissatisfaction, in which equity centers on a finding of legitimacy of the individuals who make decisions.
- A description of policies of influence and participation.

This Report concludes that if the logic of the decisions citizens make in choosing how and when to participate leads them away from collective bargaining (as it appears to be doing), then public policy attention ought to be focused on means of altering citizen influence, rather than on direct participation.

INTRODUCTION

Citizen participation has been an important policy emphasis in education for a generation -- the same generation that has witnessed the growth of active and influential teachers' organizations and the transformation of public schools into a unionized work environment.[1] During this period, the involvement of parents in school district decisionmaking has been expanded from the citizen involvement movement of the 1950's, an offshoot of human relations management, to a means of citizen participation intended to yield substantial influence.[2]

Because both citizens and unions have sought access, influence and legitimation in educational decisionmaking, it is not surprising that they have tended to clash. Nowhere has the clash been more obvious than in citizen group attempts to participate in collective bargaining.[3] Citizen organizations hold that collective bargaining, in effect, preempts important areas of school policy by allocating resources through mechanisms that are closed to them. According to the Executive Director of a taxpayers' association in a large

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1 The National Education Association counts about 1.8 million members and the American Federation of Teachers about 450,000. Their combined numbers account for approximately 91 percent of the public school teachers in the United States. As an industry, public school teaching is more heavily unionized than steelmaking or construction. For union growth and state statutes, see: Anthony M. Cresswell and Michael J. Murphy with Charles T. Kerchner, Teachers, Unions, and Collective Bargaining in Public Education (Berkeley, CA: McCutchan, 1980).

2 For a summary of the citizen participation movement and its history, see: Donald B. Reed and Douglas E. Mitchell, "The Structure of Citizen Participation: Public Decisions for Public Schools," in Public Testimony on Public Schools, editors Shelly Weinstein and Douglas E. Mitchell (Berkeley, CA: McCutchan, 1975), pp. 122-159.

3 A detailed bibliography of other citizen participation literature can be found in Don Davies and Ross Zerchykov, Citizen Participation in Education: Annotated Bibliography, 2nd edition. (Boston: Institute for Responsive Education, 1978).

California city: "Collective bargaining is the most impossible thing to get your arms around. The negotiators for both sides say that to be successful, things have to be private -- that going public binds or inhibits them. They don't like to be public until they're all done." His association members meet publicly and privately with board members to, as he says, "pressure them to maintain a hard line, toughen up evaluation of teachers, demand trade-offs, and go to the wall on binding arbitration."[4] Teacher organizations typically view parents as a threat and as illegitimate, unwelcome visitors. Politics, contends Albert Shanker, president of the American Federation of Teachers, is not the parent's place.

> When it comes to student achievement, the most important role for parents is not committee work, politics, or a role in school governance. It is what they do with their own child in their own home that counts, how much they help, and how much they reinforce what goes on in school. [5]

With respect to student achievement, Shanker may well be right, but it is precisely the relationship of lay people to policy that has been brought into question by citizen activists. As David Seeley, former executive director of New York City's Public Education Association, says: "The teacher power movement, like all such movements, has limits, and these limits are rapidly being reached as parents and citizens become disaffected."[6]

By and large, teacher organizations and school administrators have been successful in keeping parents away from the bargaining process. This has not been a difficult task. Usually citizens have not attempted to participate, but when they have, labor and management agree on excluding outsiders. Thus, it came as a big surprise that, in the eight school districts we studied, citizens

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[4] From field notes.

[5] Albert Shanker, New York Times, December 2, 1979, p. E9 (advertisement).

[6] David S. Seeley, "The Basis for a New Parent-Teacher Relationship in Collective Bargaining," in Public Access: Citizens and Collective Bargaining in the Public Schools, editor Robert E. Doherty (Ithaca, New York: New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell University, 1979), pp. 37-38.

were highly influential in determining the course of school labor relations; they were influential, but they did not participate directly. Citizens, individually and in organizations, influence the tone of labor relations, the toughness or meekness of the parties at the bargaining table, and frequently the issues. In addition, citizens were highly influential in other decisional arenas that affected employee relations such as courts, the state legislatures and electoral politics.

This seeming paradox of low direct participation and high influence has led us to two conclusions. First, there is a logic to the decisions citizens make in choosing how and when to participate that leads them away from collective bargaining. That logic involves the conversion of particularistic, child-centered participation into citizen participation aimed at altering organizational policy and practice. The logic of participation involves choices of where and how to participate. Because this is the case, the logic of participation leads citizens toward alternative paths of policy influence.

Second, if the logic of participation leads citizens away from interventions in collective bargaining as it appears to be doing, then public policy attention ought to be focused on means of altering citizen influence rather than direct participation. Here again, the choices of where to participate in the decision cycle and where in the organization are important.

THE CHOICE TO PARTICIPATE: WHERE AND HOW

Method, Organization and Background of the Study

Our conclusions are grounded in 18 months of field work in four school districts in California and four in Illinois which were intensively studied for an entire bargaining cycle -- from issue formation to settlement. Each district had an active and potent teachers' organization affiliated with either the National Education Association or the American Federation of Teachers. Each district had a contract which expired during 1979. Enrollment in the study districts ranged from approximately 700 students to more than 120,000.

Both states are populous and highly diverse, but they have quite different legal settings for school labor relations. Illinois has no public sector labor relations statute, and its schools bargain under a series of case law decisions

that, in effect, give school boards the right to recognize teacher organizations as bargaining agents, but not the obligation to do so. California has a bargaining statute, one that specifically includes a provision for publicizing initial demands of teachers and management and holding school board hearings over their contents.[7]

Repeated open-ended interviews were held with persons active in the district's collective bargaining and with other interests or interest groups surrounding the school district. In most districts, we were also able to observe bargaining sessions, the caucuses of both management and labor, management meetings such as the superintendent's cabinet, and teacher organization meetings. Pertinent documents were also reviewed -- these ranging from the collective bargaining contract and its history to current newspaper articles.

The analysis of field visits, notes and other artifacts followed.[8] We created categories and patterns that were consistent across all eight districts and subsequently developed propositions about citizen participation. Our findings will be illustrated here through the use of three examples of citizen participation and influence. Each example will be presented in several successive iterations so that the logic of participation and its relationship to citizen influence unfolds as the illustration is developed.

Participation Low, Influence High

In the eight sample districts, we found only two cases of direct participation by citizens in the collective bargaining process, despite opportunities for greater participation. What was most surprising was that the special structures for citizen input called for under California law were so seldom and inconsequentially used.[9] This initial impression was intensified by a representative sample of 30 California districts in which there was no substantive

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7 California Government Code, Sec. 3547.

8 For a methodological introduction see: Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss, "The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research," (Chicago: Aldine, 1973).

9 John R. Pisapia, "Open Bargaining: Florida Style," (Morgantown, West Virginia: West Virginia University, 1980).

counterproposal made through the public hearing mechanism called for in that state's public sector collective bargaining law. In one district, the League of Women Voters expended substantial effort to get the school board to adopt specific procedures for public comment on initial proposals, but, after being adopted, those procedures were used only once. In two California districts, groups attempted to gain access to the bargaining table as observers. Their requests were denied. No further attempt was made to obtain access to the bargaining table or to present either labor or management with issues or conditions that the citizens' organizations wanted bargained. We found one district in each state (outside of our study districts) in which bargaining had been actually opened to the public. However, the public observers were barred from participation in the negotiations and, as far as we could observe, this openness of negotiations did not affect their course. This appears also to be the general case in Florida, the only state in which there is open statewide bargaining.

Citizen influence, however, is a substantially different matter. At each of the eight study sites, we found citizen influence instrumental in changing the course of labor relations through the official perception of the teachers' union from renegade radicals to legitimate opponents and through changing the citizens' perception from being comfortable partners with the administration to public employees that need watching.[10] Three of the eight sites are illustrated in the case studies below (names of towns and individuals have been altered):

> Case 1: South Garfield. South Garfield is an old, staid town with both a history and a civic identity. As one observer put it, "There's a lot South, in South Garfield." Municipal conflicts here are always low key, but the coming of teacher collective bargaining was as conflict-laden as any recent event. The teachers had been negotiating for nearly nine months, there had been informational picketing and a whiff of a strike threat, and

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[10] For a detailed explication of the development of collective bargaining in schools through three generations, see: Douglas Mitchell, Charles T. Kerchner, Gabrielle Prior, and Wayne Erck, "The Impact of Collective Bargaining on School District Management and Governance," American Journal of Education, 89, 2 (February 1981): 147-188.

there were charges and countercharges about the district's ability to end the bargaining impasse by raising its salary offer. Nancy Smith, the leader of a citizen's group, organized a public forum in which spokesmen for labor and management presented their cases.

Case 2: Industrial City. The teacher's union had been accepted by this blue collar town. Teacher-backed candidates held a majority of seats on the school board, and the contract gave teachers both a relatively good financial settlement and unassailable classroom autonomy. It was a violation of the contract for a principal to enter a classroom without a teacher's consent. But the school board came under attack for its blatant patronage in personnel policies and in the purchasing of supplies and equipment. Within two years, the control of the school board changed hands as "reformers" defeated incumbents at the polls or replaced those who resigned. Part of the general complaint was that the school district was out of control and that the "teachers got too much."

Case 3: Homestead. This district began collective bargaining violently, with an 11-day strike. Citizens were agitated. Both union and management had their vocal proponents, but most citizens just wanted the schools opened again. A group of ministers attempted to mediate the dispute. When they stood and presented their findings in a packed school board meeting, the president of the board responded in the heat of the moment, "Sit down and shut up!" After the strike was settled several days later, a campaign began to recall a majority of the school board from office.

Clients and Citizens

Each of the incidents stated above started quietly as a case of client participation rather than citizen participation. Client participation is the usual activity of parents. It involves intervention in the school system on behalf of a specific child. The goal, in the first instance, is not to reform the school system, but to have the school system accommodate the child. Most client participation is over securing the child's rights or what parents perceive to be the child's rights. Client participation most frequently occurs at the school site level directly with the principal or teacher. Generally, what the parent wants is not continued participation but fair adjudication. One might note that these cases are not unlike grievances handled within collective bargaining. The plea of the grievant is not to participate in the school's management, but to have the school do what the grievant perceives it has already agreed to do. The case of parents' rights is generally less legally explicit than that of teachers working under a contract, and thus

"rights" for parents are often embedded in customary practices of the school district or in a community culture that defines good practice.

The vast majority of potential citizen activity is absorbed by school districts through client participation at the school site level. Principals or teachers accommodate parent demands. They do so either out of an agreement that parents do have a specific right, out of agreement that the action sought by the parent is educationally meritorious, or out of a feeling that it is easier to accommodate than fight. If a demand carries with it an implied threat of further disturbance, then accommodation is more likely. However, the key question for this discussion is: what happens to parents who feel that they are denied their rights? Client participants may press for their perceived rights through the courts or administrative appeal mechanisms -- methods which are becoming more common. They may accept the judgement of a school official as legitimate and thus leave not with the answer they wanted but with the feeling that they had achieved a fair hearing. They may exit from the system, withdrawing their children, or they may become citizen participants.

The conversion of a client participant to a citizen participant depends first of all on a perception of an <u>interest</u>. Attention moves from fair adjudication of a complaint to changing the policies and practices of the school district. Because the application of those policies in question is not restricted to the single child, the realization that the desire to change school district policies almost always initiates the search for others with a similar interest in change. Client interest is transformed into a situation of citizen interest and participation.

> <u>Case 1: South Garfield</u>. Nancy Smith, who led the citizens collective bargaining forum, was a well-read, well-educated mother of a professional-class family and background. She had been active in the schools as a parent before teachers began to bargain collectively. As the impasse in bargaining became deeper, she became increasingly concerned that the rift between teachers and administrators was poisoning the harmonious relationships that had previously existed. She and her children were not affected in any specific way, but her feelings about the well-being of the school system were altered. She felt compelled to act. As she put it: "We believe in education

and in our town's schools; we're bound to get involved." Mrs. Smith had been an active member of the League of Women Voters and had been its "school board watcher," attending meetings, making reports; not because she had a particular reform in mind but because she felt a sense of duty. She organized the forum.

Case 2: Industrial City. This was a stable town, not filled with community activists. The community culture honors tradition -- church, family, and social organizations which often have roots in Eastern European homelands. People tend to leave school affairs alone. As one mother who had attempted to organize parents of a curriculum reform disappointedly noted, "We're just not that kind of town." But the community was becoming dissatisfied because their sense of well-being surrounding the school system was being violated. There was no universal complaint, no single organized campaign, but the community came to feel dissatisfied with the present leadership. Candidates independent of the dominant political party ran aggressively for election, and they were embraced by the electorate.

Case 3: Homestead. The teachers' strike took on the appearance of a free-for-all. It was not a simple two-way affair between teachers and administration. Everyone, it seemed, was involved: the local newspaper; parents trying to secure physical safety for their Children; local state legislators trying to look effective. The school organization could not contain the fight.

Nancy Smith became a citizen participant out of a sense of obligation. She rather enjoyed the process and the company of other serious, intelligent women, but, most of all, working in the schools was something that people "like her" did. The reform candidates in Industrial City became active because the blatant political patronage had handed them a potent campaign issue. In Homestead, parents became activated because of the attraction of disturbance.

The attraction of disturbances deserves an expanded comment since disturbances are so frequently associated with labor relations and the number of participants affects the course of events.[11] A strike, or the threat of a strike, is the most powerful event in transforming client participants into citizen participants. The usual and swift citizen reaction is to press for

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11 As Elmer Schattschneider put it: "The number of people involved in any conflict determines what happens; every change in the number of participants, every increase or reduction in the number of participants affects the results." Elmer E. Schattschneider, The Semisovereign People: A Realist's View of the Democracy in America (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960).

restoration of services. A decade ago, Wellington and Winter hypothesized that the strike weapon gave labor unbeatable power because the public would always press governments for continuation of services at the expense of management's bargaining issues.[12] Indeed, citizens do seem to press for resumption of services but the Wellington and Winter thesis is undercut by two types of citizen action. First, parents are less reluctant to cross picket lines and send their children to school with substitute teachers than had been believed. In two of our California sites, strikes have not been successful in closing the school. Second, pressure has been directed at both sides. In California, we find parents in struck districts communicating with parents in other districts who have been through strikes. A communication network is operated through such groups as the PTA, League of Women Voters, and the Informational Project of Education: Network (IPEN) in Palo Alto. Two parental strategies are emerging to pressure management and labor to settle. One is to camp outside the negotiating rooms and to stay there until settlement is reached. The other is to capture media attention in any way possible and emphasize that both parties are culpable. Citizen activity in strike situations has a broader effect of creating citizen leaders. Because of her League of Women Voters experience, Nancy Smith developed genuine expertise in collective bargaining, or what was perceived as such within South Garfield. Other citizens called on her to explain the state's collective bargaining law. She became visible and known in the community and ultimately was appointed to official advisory committees within the school district. In Homestead, too, involved citizens started to gain name recognition. The issues in which these persons were active became symbolic of larger community issues. Parents protecting the rights of their children had become converted into citizens advancing an interest.

The Opaqueness of Citizen Interest

One of the reasons that labor disturbances are so effective in activating citizen participation is that citizen interests become clear and visible during

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12 Harry H. Wellington and Ralph K. Winter, Jr., The Unions and the Cities (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1971).

times of disturbance. Such is not the case at other times, and during these times the labor relations process often obscures the fact that one's own interest is connected to the processes of labor relations. Thus, parents and other citizens are usually not activated except in times of disturbance. Citizens are repeatedly assured by school officials and state legislatures that collective bargaining has to do with the wages and salaries of teachers and certain employment conditions, and that questions of education are not discussed. The assertion is only partly true.[13] In most cases, educational policy decisions are not discussed per se, but the educational policies and practices of the schools are decidedly affected by collective bargaining. The curriculum is changed, particularly the extracurriculum. Also changed are the intensity of contact with children and other types of contacts that occur between teachers and children outside of the classroom. There are explicit trade-offs, such as class size traded against teacher salary, and implicit trade-offs that have to do with the substitutability of resources -- for example, aide time versus teacher time; or the use of personnel versus the use of instructional hardware.[14] Meeting with parents and time for meeting with parents are often explicit topics of bargaining, but the implications of meeting with parents are frequently not drawn at the bargaining table because the focus is usually more on the dollar cost of agreement than it is on the instructional costs of agreement. Labor relations also affect the psychological contract that teachers have with their work, their commitment to craft, and their identification of work role. The decisions to give and grade homework are often affected by the ebb and flow of labor relations, but are seldom an explicit topic of bargaining. The relationships between collective bargaining and the education of children are profound, our research convinces us, but

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[13] Charles T. Kerchner, "From Scopes to Scope: The Genetic Mutation of the School Control Issue," Education Administration Quarterly, 14 (Winter 1978):1. pp. 64-79.

[14] William T. Garner, "Linking School Resources to Educational Outcomes: The Role of Homework," Research Bulletin, 19 (November 1979):1.

they are indirect and thus often unrecognized. A more frequent occurrence is that citizens are activated by a sense of obligation or a desire to influence a particular issue. After their initial activation, citizens find out that achieving their interest is affected by collective bargaining.

The Criteria for Participation

We found that citizen activists do not automatically choose to be active in school collective bargaining even when a labor disturbance motivated them to be active in the first place. Quite to the contrary, we found that citizens tended to drift away from labor relations and toward other places where school policy decisions are made.

In trying to follow this movement of participation, we considered three different arenas of decisionmaking and two different phases of the decision process. The arena of decisionmaking has to do with where in the organization decisions are made and what process is used to reach a conclusion. Some decisions are made within the professional and bureaucratic arena -- i.e., within the formal structure of the school organization and according to criteria that dictate attention to standards of "good practice."[15] Others are made in the political/legal arena which involves parties other than the professional school hierarchy and includes school boards, legislatures, and courts. These decisions are made according to criteria for achieving coalitions or for amassing evidence according to precedent. Finally, there is the arena of labor relations which embodies elements of the other two arenas and adds the special environment of labor law and the peculiar mechanism of collective bargaining.

The choice between these decisional arenas is not trivial. Each potential participant to the decisionmaking process has resource advantages in different arenas and will thus tend to carry decisions to areas of decisionmaking in which he/she dominates. School superintendents seek to establish professional and

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15 Gabriel A. Almond and G. Bingham Powell, Jr., Comparative Politics: A Developmental Approach. (Boston: Little, Brown 1966). Other elements in the Almond and Powell typology include the formation of rules, the enforcement of rules (rule application) and decisions about the application of rules in individual cases (rule adjudication) and finally the communication of activities in the political system to the external environment.

bureaucratic hegemony over decisions, and unions try to increase the scope of issues carried into collective bargaining. In any decision opportunity, a potential participant chooses where to use resources.

In addition, the participant chose what aspect of the decision to influence. In their work on political systems, Gabriel Almond and Bingham Powell distinguish between the interest articulation and interest aggregation phases of decisionmaking.[16] Articulation is the process of forming choices either in regard to a position or an issue or from a general dissatisfaction with the present state of affairs. The process of interest articulation is highly information dependent. Communication channels are important, as are feedback mechanisms. Interest aggregation involves the making of choices between well defined alternatives. It is highly dependent on the ability to build viable coalitions or to garner other forms of support. Communication capability is not without value, but the crucial attribute in building influence is commitment--persons or organizations who will commit their resources or their actions to support a defined issue.

A finding that one's interest is affected raises three criteria for how and when to participate. The first two are highly interrelated: the permeability of the particular arena; and the efficacy of that arena. That is, can one get to the place where decisions are made and, once there, what are one's chances for success? The third criterion is efficiency. The permeability criterion is stacked against citizens. Statutes are generally unfriendly to their access to the bargaining table, as are both labor and management. This point has drawn most of the ire of citizen activist groups, so much so that it obscures an underlying question: Would citizens have an efficacious access to the bargaining table if they could legally permeate the arena? Our data suggest that they would not, primarily for two reasons. Successful negotiations require a certain amount of technical expertise that is costly to acquire, and successful negotiations take a long time.

It is quite possible to sit at the bargaining table and not understand

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16 Ibid.

what is going on, not through lack of intelligence but through lack of expertise and knowledge. First is the level of legal expertise. The meaning of a contract clause is very seldom obvious on its face, the import pivoting on the subtlety of wording--for example, the differences between may and shall. Many important sounding clauses, such as management rights and no-strike agreements, may be practically meaningless. Labor jargon adds to the confusion: a COLA is not for drinking; and a zipper clause is not nearly as interesting as it sounds. The second aspect of expertise is behavioral skill in negotiation, and that is quite different from legal knowledge, as several attorneys in our study districts proved. The internal dynamics of negotiations are often highly private, both in interpersonal trust and confidence and in the appearance of a proper moment for settlement. Timing is often more important than substance. And timing translates into sensing the correct moment--a function of exposure and experience dependent on reading verbal and nonverbal cues and on discerning genuine emotion from feigned emotion. The factors of experience and the internal dynamics of bargaining have the combined effect of making bargaining take a long time. This is particularly true in the public schools where there is frequently a summer hiatus in negotiations and where the strike or disturbance threat is practically meaningless for part of the year.

The crusher for parents and citizens is that sustained participation is often necessary to be successful since school bargaining is protracted. Success in bargaining often depends on a willingness to stay with the bargaining process and on knowing when to move forward with a concession. These factors make the efficacy of citizen participation difficult even if a legitimated right to access in the bargaining process is present.

The third criterion for citizen participants choosing a decision arena is that of efficiency. Citizens obviously can learn to negotiate, and the technicalities of the law are not above them. However, quite frequently time, energy resources, or training are not available to turn laymen into experts. But parents have more than one possibility for spending their time, and these parents in our case study generally chose to spend time elsewhere,

or on other issues, rather than attempting to penetrate the collective bargaining system.

In each of the three cases introduced previously, there was an attempt at direct citizen participation in collective bargaining. In each case, direct participation ceased or never really began. Participation took place in other decisional arenas, and the activities of citizens in those arenas continued to affect the course of labor relations even though citizens were not directly involved.

> Case 1: South Garfield. A permanent organization of citizens interested in collective bargaining was never formed in South Garfield. Although various citizens had strong normative ideas about collective bargaining, and particularly the "adversarial relation" they saw engendered, in the end parent involvement stopped when the new contract was signed. Nancy Smith, however, continued to be interested. She tried to get the new superintendent to allow her to observe the teacher negotiations that took place two years after the ones that were concluded with a public debate between teachers and the school administration.
>
> The new superintendent was adamant about not allowing citizens at the bargaining table. But Nancy Smith found another way to participate; she ran for the school board--successfully.

The transformation of Nancy Smith from parent activist to school board member was remarkable on two counts. First, she did not go to the bargaining table, even as a school board member, when she had a legitimated right to involve herself in collective bargaining. One might have expected her to summarily appear at the bargaining table, or at least to advocate board members' participation in bargaining. In South Garfield, as in most districts, school board members did not sit at the bargaining table. In addition, our interviews with Mrs. Smith indicate that she assumed her seat on the school board without strong, well articulated demands on the collective bargaining process. Rather, she had a general concern that conflict could harm the school district and that parents were being excluded from the decisionmaking, but these general concerns did not breed action.

The second aspect of Mrs. Smith's transformation had to do with the privatization of her behavior. As an activist, she was the archetype of the

demanding citizen firm in her belief that access to the arenas of decision-making and to information about school operations were a citizen's right. Interviews with her revealed a candid and highly revealing person. She became known for these stances in the community. Within the school district itself, persons with similar leanings became known as "Nancy Smith types." Six weeks after her election, we interviewed Mrs. Smith again, and we found a person performing, albeit a bit uneasily, the role of a school board member. The legal requirements of confidentiality and good bargaining practice prevented her from discussing collective bargaining with outsiders, she said. The proper behavior of school board members had been reinforced by the existing incumbents (it must be remembered that South Garfield is a town of substantial tradition); through meetings directly with the superintendent and the labor attorney; and through workshops with the California School Boards Association. It became increasingly apparent that Mrs. Smith had a different perception of herself as a school board member.

Not all school board members followed the pattern of socialization that Nancy Smith appeared to be taking. In another district, reform candidates were elected to the board and the following took place:

> Homestead. The strike ended in Homestead, and the recall campaign against three of the five incumbent school board members began. One of the major themes during the recall campaign was that teachers and citizens "weren't being listened to." There was a certain lack of specifics about what this term meant, and the election turned more on the apparent tone of the school board in dealing with the public than disagreement over specific policies.
>
> The challenged incumbents were turned out of office. Among the replacements elected was John Jacobs, a community college professor who ran on a platform of openness and honesty. He made good his platform. He was open and honest about his support for the teachers and, indirectly, the teacher union. He asked tough questions of his fellow board members. He offered contrary views. In the end, he played the role of dissenter, frequently on the short end of 4-1 votes. He grew frustrated and resigned after serving a single two-year term.

Jacobs became isolated on the school board because he failed to attend to the board's internal demands for accommodation. In Jacobs' case, unlike the

the one of Nancy Smith, the new board members formed a majority, and they had been elected on a pledge of responsiveness to the citizens and the public. Still, the board developed an internal allocation mechanism for influence with some board members becoming opinion leaders and formers of coalitions. Jacobs did not fit well. His behavior was considered erratic. He was an iconoclast of sorts, and ill-suited to political trade-offs. This turn of events also appears true in other districts where union supporters are elected to school boards. Even the reform board developed an internal sense of rules about how information was to be handled and about the handling of confidences. There was, however, a decided shift in school board responses to issue oriented groups:

> Homestead. The general and public activity that characterized the recall period subsided. But, within Homestead, groups formed around particular interests, and they became successful.
>
> Within two years groups had formed in support of the district's outdoor education program which was costly and financially suspect following the passage of the statewide tax limitation initiative, Proposition 13. These groups were successful.
>
> Most spectacularly, a group of parents in favor of fundamentalist education organized, and was successful in getting a school site converted to that mode of education over the school board's and the administration's initial opposition.
>
> In each case, supporters of the change attended school board meetings in mass, quite literally packing the relatively small meeting room. On each occasion the board adopted at least part of the proposed change.

The proposals in Homestead had common elements. Each involved a specific, defined subject rather than a general plea for better schools or more open schools. The adoption or rejection of a proposal was clear; there was clear feedback to the proponents about winning or losing. The actions of the school board in Homestead had become very closely linked to the activities of external groups. The board was not isolated from the external community, and activity or pressure from the community was matched by a response from the board.

The nature of citizen involvement in the Homestead district changed

between the time of the recall and the time of the successful interest groups. Both the goals and the arenas for action changed. The first activating event was the strike that impelled a citizen response to deal directly with the problem of disturbed school services, but no permanent citizen interest attachment to labor relations was formed. Instead, the question of whether or not the school board was representative was raised. The recall, which was largely devoid of specific issues, involved the electorate picking school board members who were "like us". In the process of the recall election and subsequent elections, the characteristics of school board members changed from those clearly of blue ribbon socio-economic status to those who were more specifically identified with particular issues--from a trustee board to an arena board.[17]

Once the arena had been established, public emphasis changed to specific issues. Achieving success became linked to making the board responsive to particular issues and not in changing the composition of the board. There was no discernible public attention paid to labor relations during this period even though there was great contention between two factions within the teacher organization.

The situation in Homestead can be contrasted with another of our case study districts which also had an active public which included organized interest groups and had several controversial issues decided during our study. In Homestead there were no resources, or organizational slack, to absorb external pressure. The district was financially troubled, having suffered from declining enrollment and loss of tax funds. The superintendent did not have an independent political base in town, and the board, because of recall votes and other membership changes, was unstable in composition and constituency. Single purpose advocacy groups were quite effective, particularly when there was no organized external opposition to their ideas. In the other district, however, there was a high degree of cohesion between superintendent and board, and the external pressure was frequently absorbed. The administration was

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17 Laurence Iannaccone and Frank W. Lutz, Politics, Power and Policy: The Governing of Local School Districts (Columbus, Ohio: Charles Merrill, 1970).

active in sponsoring structured means for inviting citizen participation, and even controlling it to a substantial degree. In addition, there were also opposing external groups that were particularly active in the controversy over the district's racial integration plan, which served as somewhat of a lightning rod to attract controversy. While this issue was active in the district, the attention paid to other decisional areas decreased. This included a decrease in the amount of public attention paid to collective bargaining except during strikes. This other district also had the financial resources to absorb external demands. It had the means to answer specific program demands, such as one demand that the district review its reading programs without making public trade-offs with other programs. Quite differently than Homestead, it was able to absorb much external pressure either by responding in limited ways to demands or in defining the range of participation activities in such a way that the internal relations between the school board members and the superintendent were not upset. In Homestead, the school district became tightly linked to the pressures of the environment. Decisions made among the staff, and between staff and board, became far less certain as the staff became subject to reversals, sometimes summary ones, by the board.

The path of citizen influence took a different turn in the Industrial City. In this case, the school board was also replaced, but interest group activity did not follow.

> Industrial City. The political turnover in the school board centered around throwing the rascals out. There were allegations of financial impropriety and a widespread feeling of exclusion--that others were running the school district and that the district had run out of control.
>
> The restrictive language in the teacher's collective bargaining contract became an electoral issue brought forth by the reform candidates, who won.
>
> After the seating of the new board, the school superintendent was dismissed, and a search started for a new superintendent, with the specific intent that the new appointee deal aggressively with the teachers during contract negotiations. Such a person was found. He came to the district with the specific intent--what he later called "the mandate from heaven"--to change job control language in the teacher contract.

> In the subsequent round of labor negotiations, the new superintendent introduced the concept of package bargaining. Work rule changes were presented to the teacher bargaining team members in tandem with whatever substantive concessions management was prepared to make. Packages were always presented but they were always presented on a take-it-or-leave-it basis. The union leadership felt it was close to its economic requirement, but it did not understand management's concern with working conditions "rights" that the union had already achieved in previous contracts.
>
> The union found that it no longer had a viable set of relationships with the school board. It could not appeal to the reasonableness of the school board members in the face of an unyielding superintendent. What was later termed a frustration strike ensued and was followed three days later with settlement essentially on management's terms.

The community intervention in this case was highly influential, but only participatory for a short period. The school board members elected during the reform movement were brought to their positions with an understanding that the electorate wanted them to "gain control of the system." There was a clear message to that direction, and the message was exercised in their choice of personnel and the choice of bargaining issues. The new superintendent was chosen primarily because of his familiarity with collective bargaining and his success in bargaining with a strong union. He, incidentally, did not try to break the union. The bargaining sessions, and the comments made to us in interviews, did not reveal a particular animosity toward the teachers' union or unions in general. So, in this case, the attack on the existing contract was part of a management strategy that had to do with the direction of the enterprise rather than an ideological struggle over the status of employees. The prime issue was the teacher evaluation clause. The board wanted to change the contract so that responsibility for evaluation rested with the administration. The community, through changing participants, had greatly influenced the course of collective bargaining in Industrial City.

The Indirect Influence on Collective Bargaining

The presence of substantial indirect influence and low levels of direct citizen participation in collective bargaining can jointly be explained by the relatively low motivation for citizen participation and the attractiveness

of arenas for participation other than collective bargaining. Our three case study illustrations provide examples.

If one first examines the series of choices that appear in the logic of participation--this series of choices is sketched in Chart A on the following page--one quickly sees that at any decision point the potential citizen participant is faced with a potential alternative to activity. The citizen can stop being active and cope with what is a disagreeable state of affairs--frequently having the alternative of leaving, ignoring or otherwise exiting public education. It is important to note in the examination of citizen activities that the choice not to participate is always present. Even if structural barriers were lowered and even if any parent who wished to have a chair pulled up to the bargaining table could do so, a high level of participation would not be guaranteed any more than a high level of participation at school board meetings is guaranteed by open meeting statutes.

The relationship between the criteria for participation and the various arenas for decisionmaking is shown in Chart B on page 22. The labor relations decisionmaking arena appears to be difficult to permeate, of questionable efficacy and relatively inefficient. The most distinct problem with the labor relations arena is one of having an opening for direct participation or an opening from which an agent can participate. The external political arena has already developed ports of access.

School boards are elected, and, in some states such as California, they are sometimes recalled from office. Lobbying in support of particular school programs or particular educational legislation is an available avenue. Access to school professionals may be technically present, but, operationally, access is highly dependent on the perceived legitimacy of those who seek access, or their ability to cause a disturbance if they go unheard. If one's group or concern is not considered legitimate, then the ability to coerce becomes important. Gaining access through disturbance has been part of the lore of community action groups going back at least to Alinsky. Labor relations has a relatively low permeability. As discussed above, statutes frequently allow labor and management to bar outsiders, and the technical ability of outsiders to participate is limited even if they were allowed to participate.

Chart A

THE LOGIC OF CHOICE IN CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

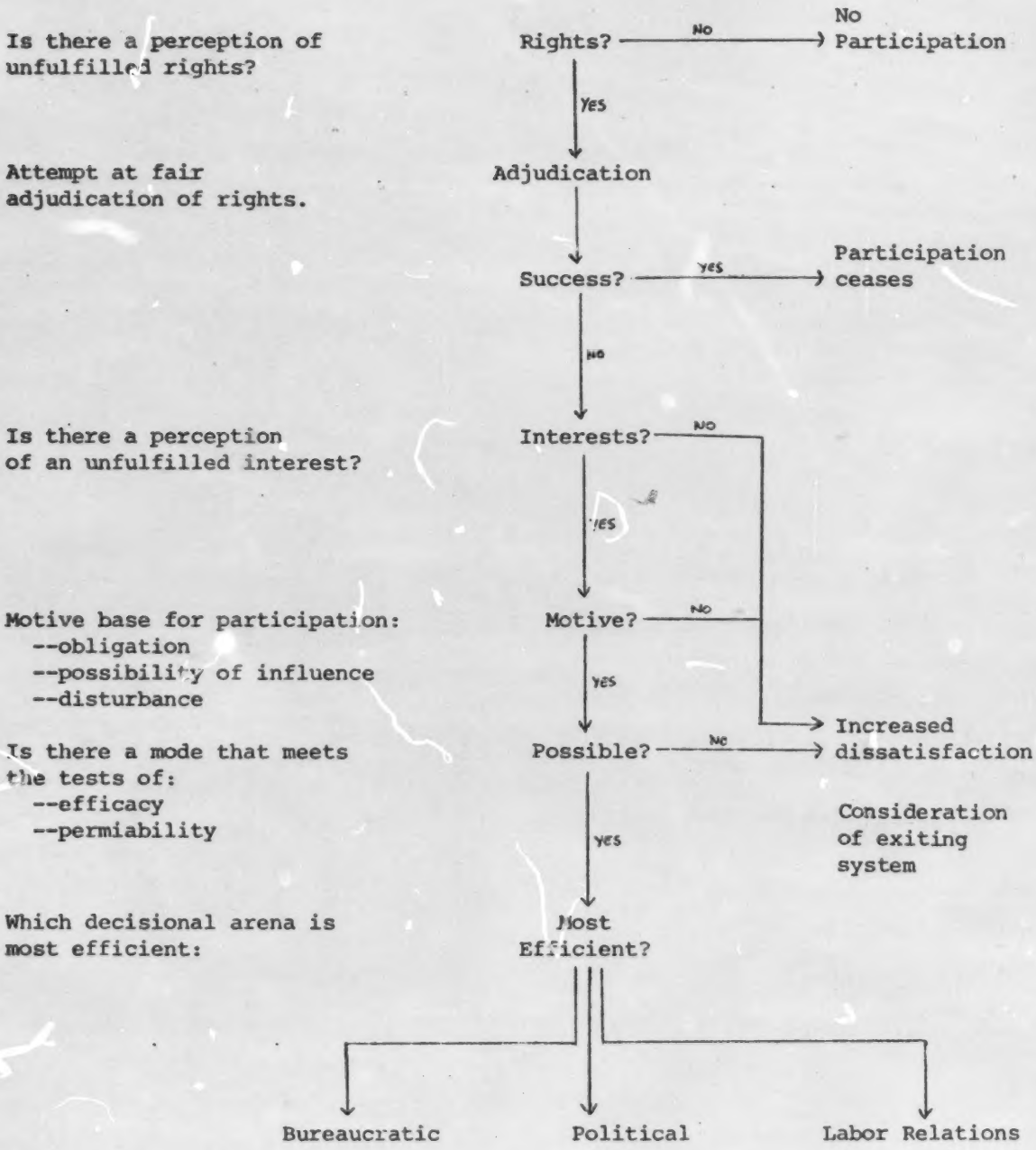

Chart B

RELATIONSHIP OF ARENAS OF PARTICIPATION TO CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATION

	Permeability (Access)	Efficacy (Scope)	Efficiency (Resources)
Legal/ Political	HIGH Lobbying Recalls Elections	MODERATE Specific legislation can be obtained, but the implementation is frequently unsure.	HIGH TO MODERATE Pressuring school boards can sometimes be quite easy, accomplished through massing citizens at a board meeting.
Professional/ Bureaucratic	MEDIUM Highly dependent on perceived legitimacy of person making request or their ability to make a disturbance.	UNCERTAIN A proposal can be framed to reflect what citizens want. It is frequently problematic as to whether school administrators can respond to those propositions.	HIGH Legitimate small groups or persons are frequently successful.
Labor Relations	LOW Legal and technical restrictions against citizens success.	LOW The basic agenda of labor relations is determined by the primary parties; citizens concerns may be touched upon, but so will other matters.	LOW Generally requires systematic change before parents and citizens can participate. The cost of structural change is very high relative to other opportunities for influence.

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The efficacy criterion determines whether goals can, in fact, be attained in each of the three decision arenas. An exact answer, of course, depends on the specific goals involved, but there are general characteristics of each decision arena which make them more or less generally efficacious. The political arena or mode of decisionmaking has become increasingly important in educational decisionmaking as the Federal and state governments have been transformed over the last two decades from monitors of education to policy advocates. Teacher organizations have been heavily involved in lobbying, and so have citizen groups interested in particular educational changes, the most dramatic example being the national coalitions of parents of handicapped children. The difficulty with legislation from the standpoint of its efficacy comes during its implementation. As the political literature reminds us, passing a statute and implementing it are two different matters. The efficacy of the professional/bureaucratic mode of decisionmaking is problematic. In one sense, the mechanism is clearly efficacious. Citizens can shape specific proposals tailored precisely to achieve what they want. Whether the professional school administrators can respond to what they want is altogether a different matter. They are constrained sometimes from acting, although parents suspect that they are not so frequently constrained as they allege. Labor relations appear somewhat less efficacious. Most of the citizen agenda appears to involve items that fall beyond what is customarily negotiated in labor contracts, so the effects of labor contracts are indirect. In addition, much of what goes into labor contracts is of little direct interest to parents and citizens. We have tried to find a parent, other than one who happens to be an insurance agent, who is very interested in the name of the school district's insurance carrier, something known to hold the attention of labor negotiators for weeks on end.

The efficiency criterion determines what resources are necessary to gain an end. At least in our impressionistic evaluation, the efficiency of the political mode of decisionmaking appeared to be relatively high from the citizen activist perspective. School board election campaigns were relatively easily undertaken. Except in big cities, campaign costs are generally low, and the organizing required is of short duration. Moreover, school boards in

our study sites have shown themselves to be quite easy to influence by citizens who appear in large numbers at school board meetings in support of, or opposition to, a specific issue. Even in large districts, the appearance of 300 people at a school board meeting gains immediate attention and, more often than not, modification of position. Electoral recall, which is becoming a common feature in California school politics, is a quite potent means of influence. Even the threat of recall, signaled by the circulation of a petition to put a recall measure on the ballot, is sure to garner attention. Of our four California study sites, one had a successful recall, another a threatened recall. The professional/bureaucratic mode of influencing decisions is perhaps the most efficient of all, and hence it is usually the first attempted. But, as indicated above, the efficacy and permeability of this mode of decision-making is frequently questionable. Labor relations appear a relatively inefficient means of citizen participation. Even if there were no structural barriers, the amount of time that a citizen or group would have to spend directly participating in bargaining or closely monitoring its behavior is quite extensive. Bargaining a single contract can continue for months; issues may go partially resolved for years.

Looking back on the three case examples, we can see that citizens chose the political arena for most of their direct participation: in Industrial City, the board was replaced; in Homestead, it was both replaced and used as a forum for response to specific issues; and, in South Garfield, parents acted independently of the school board at first, but ultimately placed one of their own among the board members. While there were tentative efforts in all three districts to directly participate in collective bargaining, those efforts ended early. Influence in each district, however, flowed from the citizen activity to the bargaining table.

The influence generated in South Garfield is only involved in the settlement of the labor dispute in a limited way. From interviews with the two parties, it appears highly likely that labor and management would have settled in a few days with or without the intervention of the citizens forum. What is of substantially more import is the question of the legitimation of the teachers'

organization--i.e., whether the ethos of the community, which was highly supportive of teachers and education but quite paternalistic at the same time, will be expanded to include a rightful place for an outspoken and aggressive teachers' organization. Whether or not it becomes "all right" in South Garfield for teachers to forcefully pursue their self-interest has become a function of the way the school board reacts to the union presence. The citizen activist who is now a school board member will play an important part in either granting or withholding legitimation.

Issues created by the parent activity have come to the bargaining table in Homestead, and more are likely to. The establishment of the fundamental school was accompanied by parents who had strong ideas about curriculum and the code of behavior, both of which differed from the standards elsewhere in the district. The parents' group, armed with a curriculum gained from a nationwide group of fundamental school parents, asked for a dress code and disciplinary procedures. They also wanted to pick the teachers and to evaluate them. The teachers defensively have carried these issues to the bargaining table. Transfer, discipline and evaluation clauses were all introduced into collective bargaining by the teachers during the last round of negotiations. They were not bargained to completion, but the fundamental school issue has not yet appeared in a specific transfer case. Thus far, all the teachers in the Homestead fundamental schools have voluntarily transferred from other schools, and there is a common educational philosophy among them. But that situation is not likely to last. The district is faced with the prospect of closing several schools because of declining enrollment, and school teachers will doubtless be dismissed from the fundamental school on the basis of seniority and other teachers will doubtless be assigned there. Questions concerning these issues will clearly arise at the bargaining table or the grievance processes. Moreover, the relatively specific expectations of parents place the school board and administration under some constraints about their bargaining positions on those issues.

It would be hard to overstate the effect the citizen influence has had in Industrial City. There was never an attempt at direct bargaining table intervention by the pbulic or opening the session to public view. Yet, via

the election process, citizens clearly spelled out what the new issues would be. They also reinforced those issues with publicly announced commitments to specific demands. The school board president personally became the chief negotiator and, although there is substantial testimony that he was not the most skillful spokesman, there is little question that the issues on which the board ran for election were clearly represented during negotiations. Moreover, they prevailed.

Summary

Parents and citizens participate in school affairs when it becomes apparent that they need to forward their interests. The process of collective bargaining and its attendant public strife often trigger a perception of those interests among parents. In the forwarding of their interests, parents face a choice of what decisional arena to attempt to influence and what aspect of the decisionmaking process to enter. Direct access to collective bargaining poses a problem, but even if it did not, participation there would be difficult because parents generally do not possess the time, the expertise or the sanctions to participate effectively. Conversely, citizens have shown their ability to efficiently influence other arenas, particularly the political arena, in the electing and pressuring of school board members for response to particular issues. The important point, though, is that there are choices among places and ways to influence school districts. The public policy outflow of that realization is that parents and citizens ought to be cognizant of the range of influence possibilities. This same variable--the variety of influence available--suggests that there are a number of ways to achieve workable school democracy. Influence may not be obtained through the same means in all school districts, or through the same means all the time in a single school district. The variety of influence alternatives discovered in our field investigation also leads us to a reexamination of the traditional theories of school democracy and of the implication that the logic of participation has for each of these theories. The final section of this Report is a review of the dominant theories of school democracy, and a preliminary and limited integration of the different perspectives on achieving participation and equity in education.

MODELS OF SCHOOL DEMOCRACY AND EQUALITY OF INFLUENCE

Essentially, the clash between parent/citizen organizations and teacher unions is over the equity of influence. Organized parents and citizens feel that collective bargaining preempts other school organization decisions. Resources allocated through collective bargaining bypass decision mechanisms to which parents and citizens have access and, in many cases, the collective bargaining process supplies parents with no consistent and reliable information about what was being discussed. In terms of influence, the advent of collective bargaining signaled a flight of decisions from arenas in which parents had a voice to those where parents did not have a voice.

As might be expected, the initial responses of parent and citizen groups were to attempt to obtain access to collective bargaining or to obtain sufficient feedback from the bargaining process so that parent and citizen interests could be protected before a contract was finalized.[18] Essentially, these responses followed an informed competition model of obtaining equity in influence. In informed competition, equity centers on a perception of legitimacy in how decisions are made. Equity is present if there is a finding that the permanent structures for access and influence are present and legitimate. Operationally, one looks for: widespread knowledge about school issues in the population; a lack of any excluded segments in the population; and established means for access and information flow. Informed competition theory flows from the research of David Minar and of Harmon Ziegler and Kent Jennings.[19]

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[18] Charles W. Cheng, "Community Representation in Teacher Collective Bargaining: Problems and Prospects," Harvard Educational Review, 46: 153-174 (May 1976). Cheng enumerates the forms of community participation as: (1) seeking input during the formation of demands, (2) multi-level bargaining with some issues settled at the school site or other location less centralized than the school district, (3) bargaining in public, (4) observer status to designated community representatives or groups, (5) formal negotiator status to community groups.

[19] David W. Minar, Education Decision Making in Suburban Communities, (Evanston: Northwestern University, Cooperative Research Project 2440, 1966). L. Harmon Ziegler and M. Kent Jennings, with G. Wayne Peak, Governing American Schools (North Scituate, Mass.: Duxbury Press, 1974).

It has also been the dominant theory followed by the Federal government in pursuit of "maximum feasible participation." However, our research reveals that influence is achieved through means other than informed competition. Particularly, citizens increased their influence by pressing for specific issues or through establishing coalitions around dissatisfaction with the incumbent leadership of the school district. These two means of establishing influence are consistent with two alternate models of school democracy--issue responsiveness and dissatisfaction.

In issue responsiveness, a finding of equity centers on a finding of legitimacy in what is decided. The key is what is decided rather than how. The mechanisms for influence are potent lobbying and pressure groups for or against specific issues and issue dominated elections. Thus, direct participation in collective bargaining becomes of little importance since demands may be carried into collective bargaining by others--either labor or management--and what is important is what emerges from bargaining, not how bargaining is conducted. Or the issue may not be carried into collective bargaining at all. It may be carried into another decisional arena, such as the school board's deliberations or into the state legislature. In the education literature, issue responsiveness is best represented by Frederick Wirt's edited volume, The Polity and the School.[20]

In dissatisfaction theory, equity is present if there is a finding of legitimacy of the individuals who make decisions. Actual issues are frequently not present, and participation is episodic rather than continuous. Levels of dissatisfaction periodically rise, citizens are motivated to action, and subsequently the leadership reacts or is replaced. Long periods of apparent dormancy may be observed. During these periods, the school district political mechanisms are generally not activated at all, and the district may be said to be operating within a zone of tolerance established by community culture. However, the observation that a school district is currently quiet

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20 Frederick M. Wirt (ed.), The Polity and the School (Berkeley, CA: McCutchan, 1976).

provides no justification to assume that it will remain so.

When the level of dissatisfaction rises, that dissatisfaction has the effect of overriding other issues, and the dissatisfaction with the current leadership becomes the "issue" around which a coalition is formed. Replacement of the leadership may take the form of electoral defeats of school board members or challenges of incumbent board members through recall elections. The recall election challenge was a particular factor in the California districts in the sample. Indeed, the threat of a recall was sometimes sufficient to persuade the incumbent not to run for another term. Dissatisfaction can also be aimed at the appointed leadership, from the superintendent on down the hierarchy. Frequently, dismissal of the superintendent follows school board electoral defeats.[21]

Equity Through an Unstable Combination of Means

Each of these three models of school equity--informed competition, issue responsiveness, and dissatisfaction--is usually considered separately. Therefore, the test of the presence or absence of equity becomes whether the criteria of a single model, such as informed competition, are met. In terms of citizen participation in collective bargaining, the criteria of the informed competition model have very seldom been met, and thus it has been concluded frequently that citizen influence is low. However, our findings suggest that influence operating through either issue responsiveness or dissatisfaction is actually quite high. In the school districts we studied, citizens followed the logic of participation, choosing whether or not to participate and where. The consequence of the citizen search for different models of influence was that the use of any one of three models of influence contributed to the achievement of equity.

We also wish to advance three other points about the relationships among the three means of achieving school democracy. First, from observation in the eight case study districts, dissatisfaction theory models of influence

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21 Iannaccone and Lutz, Politics, Power....

appeared to swamp or override activities being undertaken in one of the other two models. Either issue responsiveness and informed competition activities ceased, or they ceased to be important determinants of school policy. Second, the choice of one of the three means of influence appears to be related to the level of conflict apparent in the school district. Third, we tentatively conclude that each of the three means of influence is unstable and carries with it the seeds of its replacement or abandonment.

As we examined the political histories of the eight case study districts, we observed that the model of participation changed over time and that, eventually, activities consistent with dissatisfaction theory took place. When dissatisfaction arose, the activities which followed altered the social order of the district in such a way that the structures that allowed informed competition or issue responsiveness to operate were altered, too. In Industrial City, the behavior of school politics changed from issue responsiveness to dissatisfaction. In the issue responsiveness period, the two factions of the school board and the teacher organization dominated. Dissatisfaction grew, primarily aimed at the school board, and the board was replaced in successive elections. When the realignment of the school board took place, the set of relationships that caused the former board members to be responsive to the teacher organization failed to exist. Responsiveness activity has not reestablished itself through teachers or any other interest group.

In South Garfield, a period of informed competition was followed by dissatisfaction and finally by issue responsiveness. The informed competition period took place when the structured forums were set up to mediate the impasse between the teacher organization and the district. Dissatisfaction, muted though it was, appeared in the removal of the old superintendent and the turnover in board members. The informed competition activity, which was earlier supported, was abandoned because the new school board felt that dealing with the teachers in private was the best way to achieve labor peace. The decision was supported by the former citizen activists, who now held seats on the school board. Since the installation of the new superintendent, activity has tended to be of the issue responsiveness type. Parents in

non-affected neighborhoods are without an issue and have not participated. Teachers have perceived their own interests in organization. Both the school board and the administration have perceived separate interests, and the internal structures of each organization have been tightened.

At Homestead, issue responsiveness activity continues as dissatisfaction grows. Teachers, by their organizing, have become one of the interests that are being responded to, and the teachers themselves have become the source of irritation and dissatisfaction to organized parent groups. The superintendent's intentions to establish informed competition forms of participation have largely been abandoned because the teachers, in their dislike for the superintendent, avoid activities that make him "look good" and because the parents know that they have a more potent means of influence.

The choice of which influence model to be used is related to the level of conflict in the district. When conflict is high, dissatisfaction theory activity spreads and dominates. Of course, dissatisfaction activities lead toward open conflict, but general dissatisfaction also grows from more narrow conflicts when those conflicts become notable and public. Informed competition or issue responsiveness appear as mechanisms of citizen influence as conflict builds or subsides.

Citizen influence is most apparent when it occurs as issue responsiveness. There is organized activity to watch, and issue-related activity has within it a feedback mechanism that constantly reminds the participants of their achievements--or lack of them. Thus, one would think that issue responsiveness structures, engineered by interest groups, would have great stability once established, but to our surprise we found that the issue responsiveness model of influence was unstable. Indeed, all three models are unstable.

Informed competition is unstable because continued citizen participation is not an integral part of the general culture of American education. As we have suggested elsewhere in this report, a continued obligation to participate is not generally felt by persons not holding formal office in organizations. In addition, there is great competition for time. Parents in particular

have a relatively short--in terms of organizational functioning--interest span. Even discounting the possibility of family dissolution, physical relocation in urban American affects approximately 20 percent of the families in a given year. If a permanent structure is formed--one with the earmarks of a continuing organization--then that organization is faced with the problems of access and of accommodating itself to outsiders. Sooner or later, and probably sooner, the structure formed to provide parent input will be challenged by alternative viewpoints with the parent organization facing problems of dissatisfaction with the current leadership. The other possibility is that the "competition" aspect of informed competition is lost; that parents become highly socialized to their new roles, as has frequently been alleged in conventional parent-teacher types of organizations.

Issue responsiveness is unstable because, inevitably one way or another, most issues are answered. Organizations that form for the purpose of achieving a particular goal are frequently perpetuated by finding another worthy goal. However, loose ad hoc organizations seldom reform in exactly the same way. New coalitions are formed, and new persons are activated. Our field research suggests that issue responsiveness may continue for several years as the dominant way in which parent, citizen and other types of demands are manifested, but this dominance eventually ends due to problems of resource scarcity or with the legitimacy of the current leadership. The resource question is the most straightforward. It takes place when there are not enough slack resources in the organization to satisfy the different issue contenders within the group, thus meaning that there will be additional members where issues are not resolved in their favor. The organization is simply unable to meet all the claims upon it.

The inevitable displeasure with issue responsiveness produces a transfer to the dissatisfaction model. Eventually, the current leadership, which is unable to honor all the claims upon it, comes under attack itself. Then, one of three courses is followed, and each of the three courses causes an end to the dissatisfaction model of participation and a return to one of the other two models. Following the first course, the current leadership may find itself

able to negotiate a compromise agreement that reduces dissatisfaction. The dissatisfied come to believe that the school cannot honor all their wishes, and their expectations are reduced. This course was widely followed in California school districts following the passage of Proposition 13, and it happened in Illinois school districts following the defeat of a tax override election. Second, the attempt to oust the existing leadership can be unsuccessful and the resources of the dissatisfied are spent, at least for a time. Third, the attempt to oust the existing leadership can be successful. A new leadership is installed, and, in addition to the honeymoon period usually accorded to new leadership, dissatisfaction activity abates because the source of the dissatisfaction has been removed. The presence of the common enemy is the only factor driving the various participants, and, indeed, activating them in the first place.

Policies of Influence and Participation

The major problem in influence is that a wider recognition that various means exist for reaching a working equity between citizens, teachers and the school executive must be achieved. The existence of alternative paths to influence is typically not recognized in the literature or in specific policies. As a result, policymakers who attempt to induce citizen influence in the schools through the sole use of informed competition are often frustrated when they find low levels of sustained participation on which informed competition rests. If influence was the clear objective instead of participation, training and organizing citizens could be directed toward making choices among the different modes of influence. As the citizens in our study districts showed us they were already doing, policy and practice would be directed toward using the correct resources to gain influence within each model.

Unequitable school districts where there exist no model or combination of models of citizen influence will still remain. Intractable public tyrannies, which systematically exclude or discriminate among their constituents, are troublesome particularly because they do not appear to be changed by informed competition policies. Parent councils and Title I committees are co-opted, public

hearing mechanisms go unused or are dominated by the existing elite, citizen issues are never carried into administrative councils and are not found in labor relations either. The development of issue responsive mechanisms, including parent unions, takes a considerable period of time or requires a catalyzing event such as a teachers' strike. Likewise, the growth of dissatisfaction is quite gradual. All of which means that, in the short run, the interests of a substantial minority can go unheeded and unsatisfied.[22]

This dissatisfaction can lead to exit. We are finding that it is only partly true that there is no ability to exit from a public school system. Private school enrollments are up. There is reason to believe that public school enrollments are somewhat overstated. The extent to which students themselves have abandoned education is understated. More students would leave public schools if the financial means were available. Although neither the Federal tax credit plan nor the various voucher plans have achieved strong political support, there is no reason to believe that the ideas are dead.[23] It can reasonably be expected that public policy choices will appear between the public support of education through finances and the operation of schools as public bodies.

A second form of leaving or exiting educational institutions is more subtle. Children are not withdrawn from schools, but rather the belief grows that schools are not places where important life chances are determined. What follows is a withdrawal of expectations and a growth of what we call "generalized non-support." Education continues to be important to its users, but it

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22 The most extensive study of citizen participation in education has been undertaken by the Institute for Responsive Education. Their findings are available in a number of reports, the principal ones being: Don Davies, et al, Overview of the Status of Citizen Participation and Grassroots Perspectives: Diverse Forms of Participation (Boston: Institute for Responsive Education, 1978).

23 For the argument favoring vouchers: John E. Coons and Stephen D. Sugarman, Education by Choice: The Case for Family Control (Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press, 1978).

lacks the general social priority. This is particularly the case in school districts with declining enrollments and settings where families with school age children constitute a minority of households in the community. This is the case in seven of our eight study districts.

School systems, and school employees, badly need generalized support. They exist only through the continued belief that schools are doing a good job and that employees are acting either in the public interest or in legitimate private interest. This requirement presents school labor relations with a serious overload problem. Historically, labor relations is seen as a legitimized system of self-interest. Particularistic self-interest among school teachers is not an adequate political base. Generally, the activities of parent and citizen groups and of the electorate appear to be suggesting that teacher unions use their organizations to support the commonweal interests of education, including efficiency interests; or at least that unions join in supporting special parent and citizen interests.

Collective bargaining, the dominant tool of American labor relations, is not well suited to broad participation. It is doubtful whether unions could achieve public participation if they wanted to. It is also questionable whether widespread public participation would yield much support for schools or whether the effect would be to yield greater factional fights. The problem for unions is to develop ways of accommodating parent and citizen interest and legitimating the school's role and parents' role in education and the citizen's role in the community.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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Mitchell and Kerchner, who served as Project Director, have just completed an extensive study of the impacts of collective bargaining in education. The first report of their research appears under the title, "The Impact of Collective Bargaining on School Management and Policy," in the February 1981 issue of The American Journal of Education.

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ABOUT THE INSTITUTE FOR RESPONSIVE EDUCATION

The Institute for Responsive Education (IRE) is a private, non-profit national research, policy analysis and technical assistance organization with an eight-year history of conducting studies on and disseminating information about community involvement in school decisionmaking. Although private and independent, IRE is housed at Boston University, where its President and founder, Don Davies, formerly Deputy Commissioner in the United States Office of Education, is now Professor in the School of Education.

Founded on the premises that citizen participation is an essential ingredient in school improvement and that citizens' access to information is indispensable for effective participation, IRE has, throughout its eight-year history, produced more than 25 reports including field-research monographs, bibliographies and literature reviews, and translations of complex, educational issues into popular form.

IRE Reports are yet another series of publications that have arisen from continuing IRE efforts to better understand and assist citizen participation in educational decisionmaking and to disseminate this information and experience to citizens, educators and policymakers.

IRE has been involved in other facets of citizen participation which include school-community councils, citizen roles in educational collective bargaining, Federal and state policies affecting citizen participation, the role of citizen-initiated organizations, declining enrollment, and citizen action research for school improvement.

In all of its work, IRE stresses a combination of study and action which makes for richer and more useful research and for action that has a solid base of data and experience. Hence, in addition to conducting studies and producing reports aimed primarily at policymakers, IRE has continued to collect and disseminate materials for community groups and citizens interested in school decisionmaking. To this end, IRE houses an ongoing clearinghouse of information for citizens and publishes a national newsletter, Citizen Action in Education. Through this clearinghouse, IRE addresses community-based education needs by the continual collection of reports, studies and handbooks, the publication of

packets and resource guides, and, whenever possible, the dissemination of information in response to phone calls and written requests. With a subscription list of nearly 24,000, Citizen Action in Education reports on current developments and models in the field of citizen participation in educational decisionmaking.

In order to expand the clearinghouse and its utility, we openly invite more materials on citizen participation. This will assist us in our efforts to provide more specific information to groups and individuals requesting assistance. Please send materials and ideas to:

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